Sustainable fossil-free fuels pioneered on RM Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run

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Pioneering sustainable fossil-free fuels used to good effect on this year's 'London to Brighton'…

The proven significance of de-carbonised mobility hailed as a game-changing moment in automotive history…

The Veteran Car Run Media Office tells us…
With all the entrants dating back to the dawn of motoring, the RM Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run is the world's greatest celebration of automotive history.This year's event, however, not only hailed the life-changing advent of motorised transport after centuries of horse-drawn carriages but also showcased the future with two of the venerable pre-1905 vehicles running on innovative sustainable fuels.

The initiative was significant and successful, too, with both Edwardian cars successfully completing the hallowed 60-mile despite heavy rain, surface water and localised flooding.

There is nothing new, of course, about veteran cars being propelled by 'alternative fuels' – some of those regularly seen on the London to Brighton are driven by electric and steam engines as well as primitive combustion engines.

This is the first time, though, that veteran cars have pioneered sustainable fuels on the annual trip from capital to coast. Fossil-free fuels not only offer a low-carbon outlook for

much-loved veteran, vintage and classic cars but also provide an attractive alternative to the widespread introduction of electric motors, which are likely to be only part of the overall solution.

Proving the potential, a single-cylinder, 6.5bhp 1904 Covert (pictured above, during heavy rain on the run!) was propelled by a 100 per cent fossil-free fuel developed by P1 and similar to the decarbonised fuel used officially by all those competing in the FIA World Rally Championship. The Covert was driven by Wolfgang Presinger, himself a veteran of more than 30 London to Brighton Runs and a board member of the Allgemeiner Schnauferl-Club in Germany.

Running the American-built Covert on a fossil-free hydrocarbon-based fuel with a blend of synthetic and bio-fuels, his findings were entirely encouraging. “Even though the weather was the most challenging I’ve ever experienced on the event, the P1 eFuel functioned absolutely perfectly – it was an entirely positive experience,” he related after a trouble-free trip to the Sussex seaside resort.

“We must now cross our fingers that these kind of fuels will soon become available in good quantities at market prices thus saving us from changing our much-cherished vehicles. Then our passionate old car hobby will be part of the solution and not perceived as part of the problem.”

Acknowledging Presinger’s foresight of pioneering a fully de-carbonised fuel on the 2022 RM Sotheby’s London to Brighton Run, he was presented with a special Hagerty Achievement Award at the pre-event Participants’ Reception held at the Royal Automobile Club on the eve of the start. The cup was presented to Presinger by Ben Cussons, Chairman of the Royal Automobile Club, and Mark Roper, Managing Director of Hagerty International (photo below).



Cussons himself drove the 10bhp, 1901 Mors entered by the event's organiser, the Royal Automobile Club, running for the first time on a forward-thinking sustainable fuel – and he was equally impressed as Presinger with his findings.

"It really could not have been any easier," he reported. "The fuel only arrived 24 hours before the Run – we simply drained and refilled the tank, completed a short test drive and packed the Mors off to London for the dawn start on the next day. In what were truly testing conditions, the car performed superbly – if anything the engine ran better than ever.

"While electric cars may be part of the solution, it's so very important that we keep an open mind. If we can find affordable alternatives that do not require a complete overhaul of the infrastructure as well as environmentally costly replacement of existing vehicles, so much

the better. And, from both my own personal experience having driven the Mors on last weekend's RM Sotheby's Veteran Car Run, and those of Wolfgang's, such eFuels must be part of this solution," concluded Cussons.



For more information on the RM Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, log on to the official website: veterancarrun.com.